



# **10<sup>th</sup> Annual Volunteer Service Awards**

**Tuesday, April 19, 2011**

**Remarks by Gov. Jan Brewer**

Thank you, and good afternoon, everyone!

It is such a pleasure to be with you today -- to honor the great commitment to service of each of the 11 recipients of the Governor's Volunteer Service Awards.

Voluntarism is a core value of our Arizona heritage -- where neighbors reach out to neighbors -- where families help families.

We understand that the institutions of government are not remedies for all our problems.

We understand that many solutions begin within a community -- where individuals and private groups show a commitment to voluntary service and the true character of this great state.

I'm proud of each and every award recipient here this afternoon, because you all show just how vital contributions of time and energy and resources can be to help those less fortunate.

Though we can never fully measure all that is accomplished with each word and deed we can, with these awards, show how grateful we are.

When we all come together -- youth, adults, businesses, community organizations and government -- we can encourage our communities to build a better Arizona.

Thank you for the countless hours you give to support issues such as domestic violence, youth development, teen driving, mentoring, crisis response, economic development and many of the other passions that you work to serve.

Let me also thank my Commission on Service and Volunteerism.

Your time and effort to support and promote volunteerism throughout the state is greatly appreciated.

I also want to acknowledge all our sponsors who continuously allow us to further the ideals of service and volunteerism in Arizona.

It is through volunteerism that great things are accomplished and active citizens are made – and through active participation and collaboration of businesses, nonprofits and other agencies, we can truly accomplish amazing things in our state.

Let me close by sharing with you a favorite story of mine, told by the late humorist Erma Bombeck.

Erma Bombeck wrote about a dream she had one night – a dream in which every volunteer in this land had set sail for another country. She wrote:

“I stood SMILING on the pier, shouting, ‘Goodbye phone committees. Goodbye disease of the month. No more getting out the vote. No more playground duty, bake sales, rummage sales, thrift shops, and three-hour meetings ...

But then ...

“The hospital was quiet as I passed it. The reception desk was vacant. Rooms were devoid of books, flowers, and voices.

“The children’s wing held no clowns, no laughter. The home for the aged was like a tomb.

“The blind listened for a voice that never came. ... Food grew cold on trays that would never reach the hungry.

“The social agencies had closed their doors – unable to implement their programs of scouting, recreation, drug control; unable to help the handicapped, lonely and abandoned ...

“The flowers in churches and synagogues withered and died. Children in day nurseries lifted their arms, but there was no one to hold them in love. ... The poor had no recourse for health care or legal aid.

“I fought in my sleep to regain a glimpse of the ship of volunteers just one more time.

“It was to be my LAST glimpse of a DECENT CIVILIZATION.”

That was Erma Bombeck's very bad dream. But, let no one here doubt what your efforts have meant – and are meaning -- to the ARIZONA CIVILIZATION.

It has meant, quite simply – EVERYTHING – which is why I wanted to come here today and tell you that, and say, again, congratulations!

Thank you, and God bless every one of you.